



Joint Virtual Meeting

Charlotte City Council
Workforce & Business Development Committee



Mecklenburg County Commission
Economic Development Committee

October 22, 2020 Summary

COMMITTEE AGENDA TOPICS

Introductions
Meeting Purpose and Intent
Current Initiative and Priorities
Future/Upcoming Initiatives

COMMITTEE INFORMATION

City Council Members Present: James Mitchell (Chair), Tariq Bokhari (Vice Chair), Dimple Ajmera, and Malcolm Graham

City Council Members Absent: Renee Johnson

County Commissioners Present: Trevor Fuller (Chair), Susan Harden, Mark Jerrell and Susan Rodriguez-McDowell

Others: Mayor Vi Lyles
Councilmember Braxton Winston
Dena Diorio, County Manager
Peter Zeiler, Office of Economic Development Director
Michael Boger, County Economic Development Department
Timothy Tibbs, County Manager's Office

Staff Resources: Tracy Dodson, City Manager's Office
Dr. Leslie Johnson, County Manager's Office

Meeting Duration: 2:00pm-3:45pm

ATTACHMENTS

1. Agenda – October 22, 2020
2. Presentations – City and County

DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS

James Mitchell, Chair of the City Council Workforce & Business Development Committee and Trevor Fuller, Chair of the Mecklenburg County Economic Development Committee called the virtual meeting to order and asked committee members of both boards, City and County staff to introduce themselves. Councilmember Mitchell turned the meeting over to Mayor Vi Lyles to give opening remarks. Both chairs shared comments on the meeting purpose and intent.

Mayor Lyles shared with the boards that this was a great opportunity for a joint meeting and the history of changing the name of the City's Workforce & Business Development Committee from its previous name of Economic Development Committee. Mayor Lyles also shared information on events that have affected our city to move in a different direction to address growth, economic mobility, affordable housing and workforce development.

Current Initiative and Priorities

Councilmember James Mitchell recognized Assistant County Manager Tracy Dodson to make her presentation. Ms. Dodson provided an overview of the City's Economic Development team and explained that the focus of the City's economic development work is broken down into four pillars that include; Prospective Business, Business Innovation, Great Places and Talent Development, all of which are people focused to ensure their protection and increased quality of life.

Ms. Dodson also shared information on the department's successes for 2020 for business recruitment & retention, workforce development and small business development. She discussed the City's investment and new innovative approach to address corridor work in six Corridors of Opportunity which will include public-private partnerships and business matching grants. Ms. Dodson highlighted a kickoff event held on September 9th for the Beatties Ford Road corridor and another planned for November 5th for West Boulevard.

Commissioner Trevor Fuller turned the meeting over to Peter Zeiler, Office of Economic Development (OED) Director for Mecklenburg County to discuss the County's effort to provide equitable economic opportunity for all its residents.

Mr. Zeiler provided an overview of the County's Economic Development program which focuses on a mixture of enhancing current activity and engaging in new activities that include:

- New & Existing Business Growth
- Small Business & Entrepreneurial Growth
- Strong Communities & Neighborhoods
- Minority, Women, Small Business Enterprise Opportunities
- Workforce Development
- Tourism, Arts and Culture

Mr. Zeiler also shared information on the County's Economic Development team and their department's successes. He highlighted the Scale – Up Education Series and Small Business Mentorship program partnerships with Central Piedmont Community College designed to support small businesses as they prepare to launch and grow.

Discussion of both presentations produced the following comments from the committee members:

- What initiatives can we work together on and where is there duplication? Example: Refugee Community Center in East Charlotte.
- What structure can be put in place so that collaboration between City and County can happen regularly?
- On shared projects, how can information be shared at the same time with City and County elected officials so there is a greater opportunity to evaluate projects?
- Can policy be put in place that would allow consistent evaluation of all projects?
- Need process on Business Investment Grants and Tax Increment Grants that provides guidance and answers what the City and County are trying to achieve.
- Long-term strategy to support small businesses.
- Build platforms to think bigger. What will we be doing 10-15 years from now?
- What are our key priorities?
- Considering that the County must also consider support of the Towns and unincorporated areas, are there opportunities to support corridors?

City staff was asked to provide the County with information on our Opportunity Hiring Grant initiative.

The Boards also discussed future and upcoming initiatives and how they could continue to work together and hold joint meetings. City and County staff have already begun conversations and meet on a regular basis to collaborate and share information between the City Manager, County Manager and Offices of Economic Development.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45pm